

IN THE CLAIMS

With this Amendment, please amend claims 14, 20, 27, 28 and 36, and cancel claims 4 and 29 such that pending claims 6, 7, 9, 11, 13-20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30-32 and 34-38 now read as follows:

1.- 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 27, and further comprising support members extending from the platform and positioned substantially parallel to the channel member, wherein portions of the support members and the channel member equidistantly extend from the platform.

7. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 28, whereupon positioning the handle from the pivotable position to the slidable position, the first stop member disengages from the first hinge member and the second stop member disengages from the second hinge member.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 27, and further comprising:
a downwardly extended guard member attached to a first end of the platform; and
a wheel connected to the underside of the platform proximate the guard member, wherein the wheel engages the ground when the platform is in a substantially horizontal position, whereupon raising a second end of the platform, the second end opposing the first end, the guard member engages the ground, whereupon further raising of the second end of the platform disengages the wheel from the ground to position the hand-truck in a substantially vertical position supported by the guard member.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 9, wherein the wheel disposes within and rotatably connects to the guard member.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 27 and further comprising a foot-brake connected to the platform, whereupon activating the foot-brake, the foot-brake extends to frictionally engage the ground, thereby preventing movement of the hand-truck.

14. (Currently Amended) A hand-truck comprising:
a platform;
ground engageable wheels connected to the platform;
a channel member fixedly attached to an underside of the platform;
a locking plate connected to the platform proximate to the channel member;
first and second spaced-apart hinge members fixedly attached to the channel member;
a handle connectable to the platform comprising:
a unitary rigid member slidably disposable within the channel member and between the first and the second spaced-apart hinge members;
a tongue portion spaced-apart from and extending parallel to the rigid member; and
a stop positioned proximate to a distal end of the rigid member; and
whereupon extracting the handle from the channel member, the stop engages the first and second hinge members and the handle is pivotally positionable between a lowered positioned and a raised position, wherein the handle is lockable to the platform by positioning the handle to dispose the locking plate between the tongue portion and the rigid member.

15. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 14 and further comprising a foot-brake attached to the platform, whereupon enacting the foot-brake, the foot-brake engages the ground thereby preventing movement of the hand-truck.

16. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 14, and further comprising:
first and second guard members attached to the underside of the
platform; and
a wheel disposed within each guard member, wherein the wheels engage the ground when the platform is in a substantially horizontal position, whereupon raising a second end of the platform the guard engages the ground, whereupon further raising of the second end disengages the wheels from the ground and the hand-truck is positionable to a substantially vertical position supported by the guard members.

17. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of the claim 14 wherein the handle further comprises handlebars that are accessible to operatively maneuver the hand-truck regardless the position of the handle.

18. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 14, and further comprising support members extending downwardly from the platform and positioned substantially parallel to the channel member, wherein portions of the support members and the channel member extend equidistantly downward from the platform.

19. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 18 wherein the support members and the channel member are positioned to receive a forklift finger between the channel member and either support member or transversal to the channel member and the support members.

20. (Currently Amended) A dual-purpose material handling system comprising:
- a platform having a plurality of sides for supporting a load placed thereon;
 - ground engageable wheels attached to the platform;
 - a unitary rigid handle connected to the platform positionable between a substantially vertical locked position and a stowed position ~~connected to the platform~~;
 - a channel member fixedly attached to an underside of the platform for receiving the handle while in the stowed position;
 - support members extending downward from the platform and positioned parallel to the channel member, wherein the support members and the channel member are positioned to receive a forklift between the channel member and either support member or transversal to the channel member and the support members, thereby allowing the material handling system to be transportable by the forklift from any side without the forklift contacting the handle regardless if the handle is in the locked position or the stowed position; and
 - a locking mechanism to lock the handle in the locked position, the locking mechanism comprising:
 - a locking plate; and
 - a tongue member spaced-apart from the handle, the tongue member and the handle engageable with the locking plate, whereupon disposing the locking plate between the tongue member and the handle, the handle fixedly secures to the platform in the locked position.
21. (Cancelled)
22. (Previously Presented) The material handling system of claim 20 wherein the locking plate attaches to the channel member.
23. (Original) The material handling system of claim 20 and further comprising a brake

attached to an underside of the platform, the brake engageable with the ground, whereby engaging the brake the material handling system frictionally engages the ground to prevent movement of the material handling system.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Original) The material handling system of claim 20 wherein at least two of the wheels are fixed directional wheels, the material handling system further comprising a guard disposed about each fixed directional wheel and attached to the platform, whereby raising an end of the platform opposing an end containing the fixed directional wheels, the guards engage the ground, whereby further raising of the opposing end of the platform positions the material handling system in a stowed position supported by the guards.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A hand-truck for supporting and transporting a load placed thereon, the hand-truck comprising:

a platform;

ground engageable wheels connected to the platform;

a unitary rigid handle connected to the platform, the handle positionable between a slidable position, a pivotable position and a locked position;

a channel member fixedly attached to an underside of the platform for receiving the handle, wherein the handle slidably disposes within the channel member while in the slidable position;

a locking plate connected to the platform; and

a tongue member extending from and parallel to the handle, wherein the handle is positionable to place the locking plate between the tongue member and the handle to rigidly lock the handle to the platform, wherein the handle is accessible at each position to operatively maneuver the hand-truck.

28. (Currently Amended) A hand-truck for supporting and transporting a load placed thereon, the hand-truck comprising:

a platform;

ground engageable wheels connected to the platform;

a unitary rigid handle connected to the platform, the handle positionable between a slidable position, a pivotable position and an extended locked position, the handle substantially perpendicular and fixedly securable to the platform while in the extended locked position to prevent pivotal movement of the handle;

a channel member fixedly attached to an underside of the platform for receiving the handle, wherein the handle slidably disposes within the channel member while in the slidable position;

first and second spaced-apart hinge members positioned beyond an edge and fixedly connected to the platform, the handle slidably disposable between the hinge members; and

first and second stop members attached proximate to a distal end of the handle, whereupon slidably positioning the handle toward the pivotable position, the first stop member engages the first hinge member and the second stop member engages the second hinge member whereby the handle is pivotal about the first and second hinge members.

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 28, and further comprising support members extending from the platform and positioned substantially parallel to the channel member, wherein portions of the support members and the channel member equidistantly extend from the platform.

31. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 28 and further comprising a foot-brake connected to the platform, whereupon activating the foot-brake, the foot-brake

extends to frictionally engage the ground, thereby preventing movement of the hand-truck.

32. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 28, and further comprising:
a downwardly extended guard member attached to a first end of the platform; and
a wheel connected to the underside of the platform proximate the guard member,
wherein the wheel engages the ground when the platform is in a
substantially horizontal position, whereupon raising a second end of the
platform, the second end opposing the first end, the guard member engages
the ground, whereupon further raising of the second end of the platform
disengages the wheel from the ground to position the hand-truck in a
substantially vertical position supported by the guard member.

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 28 and further comprising:
a locking plate connected to the platform; and
a tongue member spaced-apart from the handle, the tongue member
engageable with the locking plate, whereupon engaging the tongue
member with the locking plate, the handle fixedly secures to the
platform and is in the locked position.

35. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 34 wherein the tongue member
fixedly attaches to an outer longitudinal surface of the handle.

36. (Currently Amended) The hand-truck of claim 14 wherein the tongue portion
~~member~~ fixedly attaches to an outer longitudinal surface of the rigid member.

37. (Previously Presented) The material handling system of claim 20 wherein the tongue
member attaches to an outer longitudinal surface of the handle.

38. (Previously Presented) The hand-truck of claim 27 wherein the tongue member fixedly attaches to an outer longitudinal surface of the handle.